

USAID/West African Regional Program (WARP)

Annual Report

FY 2004

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West African Regional Program (WARP)

Performance:

Background: FY 2003 has proven to be as tumultuous a year for West Africa as FY 2002. In a year in which the War on Terror was the focus of international concern, the region nevertheless managed to attract the world's attention when the 18-year-long conflict in Liberia culminated in the exile of Charles Taylor to Nigeria. Cote d'Ivoire remained a cause for concern as peace accords were repeatedly reached and breached, and Guinea Bissau succumbed to a military coup. On the positive side, Nigeria held relatively peaceful presidential elections, and Sierra Leone appeared to be staying the course. In sum, it was again a win-some, lose-some, and worry-about-some year.

The region, as everyone well knows, is blessed with a rich resource base and enormous developmental potential. But as everyone also knows, it is cursed with weak institutions, poor management, and some of the world's highest levels of corruption. These factors are the major obstacles to the transition from poverty to prosperity. The socioeconomic indicators for the region remain abysmally low, reflecting the failure of West African states to come to grips with the issues. Additionally, failure to resolve the Cote d'Ivoire crisis continues to perturb the pattern of intra-regional trade.

The ray of hope within the region remains the growing will exhibited by key public and private sector entities to address region-wide problems. The New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the continent's multi-sectoral program for economic development, has not vanished into acronym oblivion, as predicted by many. Ghana has volunteered to be the subject of the first peer review, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has taken concrete steps to enhance its capacity to implement NEPAD projects in energy, transportation and agriculture. Progress is also being made in developing a regional Poverty Reduction Strategy Program. Regional private sector coalitions demonstrate an increasing ability to champion their causes with national and international decision-makers. The stance adopted by networks of agricultural producers on cotton production at this year's World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Cancun is testimony to their increasing sophistication. Finally, regional inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) are exhibiting an unprecedented willingness to work together on clearly defined activities in transport, trade, agriculture, and food security.

U.S. interests in West Africa encompass strategic, economic, and humanitarian concerns. West Africa's strategic importance remains high, yet chronic poverty and instability inhibit development and combine with porous borders and pervasive corruption to make the region an incubator for conflict and the recruitment of terrorists. Important oil deposits in the Gulf of Guinea and the Sahara underline the region's importance as a potential trading partner, and trade between the United States and the region is being promoted under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The United States provides millions of dollars in humanitarian assistance to the region to aid victims of conflict, disease, and natural disasters, and in FY 2003, two countries considered the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in West Africa, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria, were included in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. In sum, the United States remains committed to assisting regional development by (a) encouraging the emergence of competitive market economies, (b) strengthening conflict prevention and peace-building mechanisms, and (c) addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Partners and Beneficiaries: USAID's West Africa Regional Program (WARP) was designed to look at West Africa's development challenges from a regional perspective. Its partners are thus the region's major IGOs and NGO networks; its beneficiaries are not only the region's citizens, but also other USAID missions and U.S. embassies whose bilateral efforts benefit from the added value that the program brings. USAID addresses the issue of regional food security through its long-term partnership with the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). The WARP program works

with ECOWAS to promote intra-regional trade by creating a common external tariff, modernizing customs procedures, and developing a West Africa Power Pool that will increase trade in affordable energy among member states. USAID also partners with ECOWAS and regional NGOs to develop peace-building and conflict management capacity. Finally, the program works with the West Africa Health Organization on cross-border health issues. Of note are the HIV/AIDS prevention activities on West Africa's migratory routes and region-wide dissemination of sound health policies and practices.

Donor Relations: The important gains made in the realm of donor collaboration in FY 2002 were surpassed during the FY 2003 reporting period. An activity that began as a USAID-ECOWAS project to strengthen management capacity is evolving into a mechanism to coordinate donor inputs into ECOWAS. The united donors have encouraged ECOWAS to undertake results-oriented strategic planning that incorporates setting clear goals and objectives, choosing realistic targets, and defining activity budgets. This promising transformation is in its nascent stage, but it is real. A second donor organization that has evolved greatly in FY 2003 is the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC). Now covering the entire West African region, the organization addresses such key issues as agricultural productivity, competitiveness, modes of governance, and regional integration. The SWAC has also grown in stature as a facilitator of North-South relationships. It brought together donors and regional stakeholders on three occasions to examine issues surrounding the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire, and it hosted a meeting of representatives of regional cotton-producing nations on the eve of the WTO meeting in Cancun.

Challenges: WARP's primary challenge in FY 2003 was administrative. It involved (a) contracting for the construction of new offices in Accra, Ghana, (b) moving from Abidjan, Bamako, and Dakar to Accra, and (c) transferring WARP's accounting station and procurement office from Bamako and Dakar to Accra. As anyone who has ever undertaken such a move can attest, the logistics can be overwhelming. The second challenge was hiring what is, in effect, an entirely new workforce. Only nine members of WARP's current staff have been with the office for more than a year. The other 15 staff members were hired in late FY 2003 and eight additional staff will come on board in FY 2004. Thirdly, WARP completed the design and contracting of a new Regional Health Program to replace the Family Health and AIDS project that ended in September 2003. Lastly, USAID worked to integrate three new Presidential initiatives--Trade for African Development (TRADE), the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), and the Anti-Corruption Initiative--into its existing strategy and programs. It is important to note that two of the Initiatives were more robustly funded than the base programs themselves!

WARP believes that it surpassed expectations with respect to the first three challenges. However, more work is required to coherently integrate the Presidential Initiatives into our existing trade and food security Strategic Objectives (SOs), and plans have been made to acquire technical assistance to accomplish this task in the second quarter of FY 2004. With defensible Results Frameworks in place, the SO teams will then develop performance monitoring plans to better manage for results.

Key Achievements:

Regional Trade Integration. This is a comprehensive program to increase West African capacity to trade competitively within the region and globally, a key component of which is the development of compatible monetary, trade, and energy policies for the region. In FY 2003, the heads of states and governments of 15 countries signed the ECOWAS Energy Protocol laying the legal foundation for facilitating trade and investment in energy. The lack of a reliable energy supply is an acknowledged obstacle to economic development in West Africa. The ECOTrade activity continued to work toward the goal of an ECOWAS customs union, achievement of which will strengthen the region's trade negotiating position vis-a-vis its trading partners while being WTO-compatible. The ECOTrade activity thus worked with member states on adopting a Common External Tariff as a first step to the customs union. Training and technical assistance strengthened the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) with a view to developing a second regional currency, another necessary step on the road to the customs union. The West Africa Trade Hub (WATH) helped five governments apply for AGOA textile visas and Category 9 certifications. WATH also strengthened AGOA resource centers in nine countries enabling West African exporters to identify and contact potential U.S. importers. WATH trained over 200 producers and exporters on U.S. market requirements. The West African Business Linkages program brought together U.S. businesses and

producers in 11 West African countries resulting in over 200 transactions and two joint ventures with a combined value of \$65 million.

Health: The objective of USAID's health program is to increase the adoption of sustainable policies and approaches in the areas of reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS and child survival in West Africa. This objective contrasts with the program's previous objective of increasing the use of health products and services in just four West African countries. It also signals a critical reorientation of WARP's approach that transformed the program into a truly regional one. During FY 2003, in line with this reorientation, WARP closed down the venerable Family Health and AIDS (FHA) project and designed its new regional health program (AWARE). In its final year, the FHA program either met or exceeded its stated targets in most areas, and it implemented recommendations from its FY 2002 evaluation concerning the dissemination of lessons learned and sustainability of activities. Achievements included (a) social-marketed sales of contraceptives and clinic-based reproductive health services, an effort that produced 47,000 and 83,000 couple-years of protection, respectively; (b) 441,666 male condoms distributed, 492 people were tested and counseled on HIV/AIDS, 326,334 people reached through peer education, and 4,300 reached with community-based care in the domain of HIV/AIDS, and (c) 36,000 insecticide-treated bed nets sold, an important step in battling malaria. Equally impressive was the ramping up of the Ambassadors' HIV/AIDS Fund and the mobilization and leveraging of resources to fight HIV/AIDS from a range of other public and private sector partners. The design of the AWARE project was remarkable for the breadth of collaboration that took place from the moment of conception through the finalization of the design, an effort that brought together public and private sector entities, other U.S. government agencies, and regional donors. Following successful procurement, the collaboration has continued unabated and will culminate in the creation of a multi-partner action plan and performance management plan in the second quarter of FY 2004.

Food Security: USAID's program to strengthen regional capacity to predict and respond to food security crises accomplished several major policy breakthroughs in FY 2003. CILSS agreed to expand its food security monitoring system to three coastal states that are important regional food markets; the three major regional economic and political institutions--CILSS, ECOWAS, and WAEMU--agreed to jointly develop a regional agricultural policy; and stakeholders finally agreed a common framework for vulnerability assessment. Environmental monitoring activities also expanded from nine to fifteen countries. WARP led a multi-donor evaluation of CILSS's programs to improve program impact and investigate organizational sustainability. It also intensified its dialogue with other public and private sector organizations that will fund and/or implement the important work being carried out by CILSS.

Conflict Prevention: Because WARP works primarily on regional policy issues, its programs are, for the most part, sheltered from the immediate impact of conflicts. On the other hand, conflicts do significantly retard efforts to obtain regional consensus on key issues and to implement joint decisions. WARP's conflict prevention program is intended to develop regional public and private sector capacity to carry out programs to prevent conflict prevent and build peace, and significant gains were made in FY 2003. The West Africa Peacebuilding Network (WANEP) successfully established 11 regional peace-building NGO networks and comprehensively assessed the training needs of ECOWAS and regional NGOs. Cross-border conflict prevention and mitigation activities, developed by WARP in conjunction with USAID bilateral missions and non-presence countries, also began. In Sierra Leone's Kailahun district, a consortium of three international NGOs is assisting refugees and internally displaced persons from both Sierra Leone and Liberia. The program helps community leaders and service providers (nurses, police) to identify and handle instances of gender-based violence, and trains "psychosocial agents" to counsel individuals traumatized by years of conflict. The project also rebuilds social infrastructure and provides employment skills to its target group. In The Gambia, adjoining Senegal's troubled Casamance, Concern Universal (CU) is providing training in multiple income-generating activities, developing localized microfinance schemes, and rehabilitating local infrastructure. In neighboring Guinea Bissau, the third hot spot in this conflict-prone region, the Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA) has completed baseline studies and identified income-generating, health and education activities that will target over 27,000 families in FY 2004. In sum, the conflict SpO is finally "on track."

Public-Private Partnerships: WARP's investment in the West Africa Power Pool in FY 2003 has leveraged

\$ 6.7 million from other donors and is expected to generate massive private sector investment interest. On the other hand, structuring these partnerships in a regional setting continues to be a challenge. In FY 2003 WARP consulted with Coca-Cola to support HIV/AIDS prevention activities in Coke's regional workforce and has begun to develop an activity with Exxon-Mobil to provide health services in Chad. Additionally, WARP's unique Market Information System is designed to leverage matching private sector funds.

Gender: WARP's regional policy work in trade, agriculture and health will improve living standards for both men and women. WARP is also supporting the West African Businesswomen's Network (WABNET) to help women develop their enterprises and business skills. The joint WARP/Women in Development (WID) activity also targets gender-based barriers to business and trade and features sponsorship of women to attend events that produce concrete opportunities (e.g., shea butter export contracts).

Country Close and Graduation:

Results Framework

624-001 Increase Use of Selected, Regional Reproductive Health, HIV/STI, and Child Survival Services and/or Products in the WCA Region

624-004 Regional Economic Integration Strengthened in West Africa

SO Level Indicator(s):

Increased international electricity interconnection capacity in the ECOWAS region

Transnational electric energy sales increased

624-004-4.1 Increase in intra-regional trade

624-004-4.2 Progress in harmonizing regional fiscal and monetary policies

624-004-4.3 Improved regional institutional capacity to provide sustainable and competitively priced supply of energy

624-005 Increased Sustainable Use of Selected Reproductive Health, STI/HIV/AIDS, Child Survival and Maternal Health Services and/or Products in West Africa

SO Level Indicator(s):

Increase in condom use with last non-regular sexual partner

Increase in the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate amongst all women of reproductive age

Increase in the percentage of children aged 12-23 months fully immunized by one year of age

624-005-5.1 Increased access to quality reproductive health, STI/HIV/AIDS, and child survival services and/or products

624-005-5.2 Increased effective advocacy for action in HIV/AIDS, maternal health, and child survival

624-005-5.3 Increased public, private, and non-profit capacity for developing and implementing health policy and programs

624-005-5.4 Increased partner collaboration for transparent and efficient use of resources for developing and implementing health policies and programs

624-005-5.5 Number of HIV/AIDS assessments and TA support visits to non-presence countries increased

624-006 Food Security and ENVPolicies and Programs Strengthened and Implemented in West Africa

SO Level Indicator(s):

West African regional organizations and associations collaboratively produce an assessment of priority food security policy issues at least once every three years

624-006-6.1 Improved regional food security monitoring and disaster mitigation systems

624-006-6.2 Improved regional environmental/natural resource management monitoring and impact reporting systems

624-006-6.3 Increased capacity of agricultural and environmental/natural resource management organizations and networks to communicate and advocate

624-006-6.4 Regional options to improve sustainable agriculture are identified and implemented

624-007 Early Detection and Response Mechanisms to Prevent Regional Conflicts Established and Functioning

SO Level Indicator(s):

Conflict early detection and response mechanism is functioning at the regional level

624-007-7.1 ECOWAS early detection and response mechanism to prevent regional conflicts functioning

624-007-7.2 Capacity of regional civil society organizations to participate in conflict detection and response strengthened

624-007-7.3 Lessons learned and best practices to avoid, mitigate, or transition from conflict to democratic governance shared regionally

625-001 Assist Governments, Regional Institutions and Private Sector Associations to Identity, Clarify, and Implement Policy Options which Promote Trade and I

625-002 Regional Dialogue Increased on the Role of Civil Society and Communal, Local and National Governments in Achieving Improved Management of Natural Reso
625-003 Decision Makers Have Ready Access to Relevant Information on Food Security, Population and the Environment